(c) what is the advantage of diesel-based locomotive compared to steam-based locomotive?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K. C. LENKA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) This train was introduced w.e.f. 1.10.86 on diesel traction. Subsequently the train was speeded up by 30 minutes.

(c) Better availability due to longer intervals between maintenance schedules, lower operational costs due to diesel locomotives being more fuel efficient and requiring two men crew instead of three on steam locomotives, lower detention for service requirement, extended runs and more hauling capacity at the higher speed.

Survey on Ankola-Hubli B. G. Line

1799. SHRI J. P. JAVALI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in 1992 a feasibility survey was conducted about Ankola-Hubli new broad gauge line;

(b) if so, what are the details of the report; and

(c) whether the new B. G. line is being considered for taking construction during the current Five Year Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K. C. LENKA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A survey for construction of new BG line between Ankola and Hubli was carried out in 1992. The cost of 164 kms long new BG line was assessed at Rs. 236.80 crores with a rate of return of 16.7%. However, in the meantime, conversion of Hospet-Hubli-Goa (489 kms.) has been approved under Project Unigauge. Consequent to this a reappraisal of traffic potential on the proposed line is being done. Further action would depend on the results of the reappraisal and availability of resources in the coming years.

Interim Relief and Merger of D.A. with Pay

*1800. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that All India Railway Employees' Federation expressed its resentment over the Government's announcement of Rs. 100 as interim relief and merger of 20 percent D.A. with pay for retirement benefits which was against the intersts of the railway men in particular and Central Government employees in general;

(b) if so, how Government propose to tackle this; and

(c) whether Government propose to enter into a dialogue with the leaders of the Federation to arrive at a mutually agreed settlement to pave the way for finalisation of terms of reference of the proposed Pay Commission for Central Government employees announced by Government; if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K. C. LENKA): (a) to (c) The Railway employees are represented by the two recognised Unions on the Zonal Railways, one affiliated to All India Railwaymen's Federation and the other to National Federation of Indian Railwaymen. These Federations are signatories to the agreement.

As per extant instructions, no correspondence/dialogue is to be entered into with any unrecognised Union/ Association.

*Previously Unstarred Question No. 492 transferred from 7.12.93.